UNESCO SOURCES

N° 23 - FEBRUARY 1991

FOCUS

LITERACY YEAR: HAS IT PAID OFF?

BALEARICS: HANDS OFF MY ISLAND!

AFRICA: MICROBES AGAINST HUNGER

Readers, we have reserved this page for your comments, suggestions and criticisms. Consider it yours !

PERPLEXED BY THE MIME MARCEAU

Adèle GIRARD
Librarian
Angoulême, France

A fan of the mime Marcel Marceau for many years and, at the same time, concerned by copyright through my work, I was nonetheless perplexed by the "Facts in Photos" pages in your December issue. I doubt that this presentation will contribute to a better understanding of copyright, perhaps because the captions were not explicit enough.

SOURCES' aim was mainly to call attention to the 11-min. "Copyright" video cassette which does, in fact, provide the non-initiate with a good basic introduction to the question. In any case, thank you for your comments which reinforce our resolve to devote a full dossier to copyright in an upcoming issue. - ED

SMALL IN SIZE BUT GREAT IN BENEFIT

Mohammed ADAM SAAD
English teacher
Waddan Al Jufra
Libya

Your monthly, which I receive regularly since March 1990, provides me with the most up-to-date information on cultural matters and development. Thus, although I live in a village in the heart of the Great Sahara Desert in Libya, I feel that I'm in every part of the world your - small in size but great in benefit - magazine talks about. I am certainly not alone in saying that, through culture and joint efforts, the people of the world will succeed in overcoming their problems and misunderstandings.

A GOOD SYNTHESIS

Dr. José BENVINDO FERRAZ DIOGO
Portuguese Department
Anadia Grammar School
Anadia, Portugal

Your publication fulfils a very important role in our schools, notably on the interdisciplinary level, grouping several subjects, as it does, around a common theme.

By far its most important contribution, however, is SOURCES' universal approach to the various problems it tackles, thus giving pupils a well-synthesized perspective which is not too simplistic, humanist without being chauvinistic, global and not parochial, regional and not national.

FORUMS FOR GLOBAL THINKING AND LOCAL ACTION

Catherine YOUNG SILVA, President
Instituto de Idiomas Yazigi
Sao Paulo
Brazil

Unesco Clubs, the subject of the Focus articles in your November 1990 (No. 20) issue seem to be an important international, intercultural response to felt needs in many different fields and locations of the globe. Such clubs provide forums for global thinking and local action. They provide the opportunity for people from different countries to meet and work together, developing the active intellectual and moral solidarity upon which humanity's hopes for peace ultimately must rest.

A STIMULUS FOR OUR ACTIVITIES

Ana Maria DE OLIVEIRA, Director
National Anthropological Museum
Luanda, Angola

We are extremely pleased to receive your magazine. It is most important for institutions such as ours to receive a maximum of broad and varied information as a stimulus for our own activities.

READEX FICHE

"A PINCH OF YEAST"

How is an organization - such as Unesco - operating with a modest budget in a world beset by enormous problems, to give meaning and impact to its actions ? My answer is that, to be effective, Unesco must provide the 'pinch of yeast', not the pound of flour. International Literacy Year (ILY) exemplifies that approach. Unesco's contribution, as the lead United Nations organization for ILY, has been made in many ways, some abstract and others very concrete : in the promotion of ideas and the creation of networks, but also in the production and distribution of over 300,000 publications and documents. These various efforts have been essential to the success of the world-wide mobilization for literacy which was the main purpose and major accomplishment of the Year. We succeeded because we worked closely with others and made their success our purpose and goal. The Year has been devoted to building partnerships capable of action on the scale required in a world where more than one adult in four is illiterate and over 100 million children between the ages of six and eleven are without schools.

The World Conference on Education for All, sponsored by Unesco along with UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and eighteen other agencies and governments, forged an alliance for progress in education of unprecedented scale. But the work was also carried forward by over 110 national committees or structures, many of them outstandingly effective in promoting both national and international action. The idea for ILY came from non-governmental organizations and it was the action of NGOs that gave ILY a particular sense of purpose and mission. And behind all these efforts were millions of women and men committed to building a world which is more just, more equitable and more democratic. International Literacy Year triumphed because it highlighted and served a fundamental global need and obligation : to provide education for all. In the service of this cause, Unesco lacked neither partners nor sponsors prepared to provide the needed flour and to welcome our "pinch of yeast".

FEDERICO MAYOR

CONTENTS

PAGE AND SCREEN 4
PEOPLE 5

FOCUS

PAGES 6 to 16

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR : HAS IT PAID OFF ?

PLANET :

Fernando's fragile environment
• HANDS OFF MY ISLAND ! 18

Biosciences in Africa :
• FOOD COMES FIRST 20

Television the Jamaican way :
• LIGHTS, CAMERAS ... ACTION ! 22

Breaking the (sound) barrier :
• "UNESCO RADIO PRESENTS ..." 23

LOOKING AHEAD 24

UNESCO SOURCES

RECORDS

THE TURKISH NEY

Ney means "reed" in Persian. This reed flute plays a leading role in musical life in the Arab, Persian and Turkish worlds, while adapting itself to a range of styles and techniques. The distinguishing feature of the Turkish technique is the use of an ox-horn mouthpiece in the shape of a truncated cone, and by the length of the *ney* which enables it to produce deeper tones than the shorter Arab versions. Made of a piece of reed, about 20 mm in diameter, the *Ney* can, with its seven pierced holes, achieve a range of three octaves. The meditative, langourous and nostalgic style of playing the instrument is closely linked to the mystic tradition of the

Sufis and more specifically to the order of the *Mevlevis*, or whirling dervishes inspired by Jalal al-Din al-Rumi (13th century).
In this recording, Kudsi Erguner who, with his brother Suleyman, is the unrivalled master of the *ney*, presents traditional classical music and the ceremonial music of the *Mevlevis*, accompanied by two players of *bendirs*, percussion instruments consisting of a wooden ring with a fine skin stretched over one side of it.

● ***Turkey: The Turkish Ney, played by Kudsi Erguner, Traditional Musics of Today series. Unesco Collection of Traditional Music, Auvidis/Unesco, 1990, Cassette 52 FF, Compact 109 FF.***

PERIODICALS

IMPACT of Science on Society

Conserving and managing our genetic resources. It is now generally agreed that the conservation of biological diversity on our plant is an issue of vital importance. As pressures on the environment increase and natural habitats shrink, so genetic variability in the form of wild and primitive strains of plant and animal is under threat. This issue (No. 158) of **Impact** is devoted to the maintenance of biological diversity and the management of genetic resources. Exactly what they are and how they are conserved; the role of botanical gardens and biosphere reserves in this process; the use and handling of domesticated animals and micro-organisms as genetic resources; and the ownership of patent rights to new genetic material and the resulting organisms. These are some of the aspects of the subject addressed in this collection of original articles.

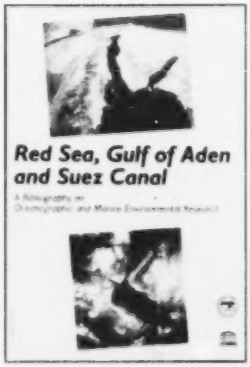
THE UNESCO COURIER

Somewhere, nowhere... the quest for utopia. "*We are living at a time when the pace of historical change is such that there is an unparalleled need for new thinking*", editorializes the Courier. "*Yet, at the very moment when we ought to be guided by the creative spirit, people tell us that utopia is dead*". This issue (February) questions the justification for rejecting the idea of utopia "*which can perhaps sketch a kind of profile for the future. But what kind of Utopia, and on what terms...*" Two new readings of Plato's *Republic* are followed by a look at Akhet-aton, the ideal city which sprang from the imagination of Egyptian pharaoh Akhenaton in the 14th c. B.C. It examines Buddhist egalitarian ideals and the dream as reflected in Russian and English literature. Finally an extract from "*A Planetary Utopia*" by its first Director-General, Julian Huxley traces the purposes and philosophy behind the creation of Unesco. This issue also contains an interview with the French Nobel Prize-winning biochemist, François Jacob.

BOOKS

RED SEA, GULF OF ADEN AND SUEZ CANAL

A Bibliography on Oceanographic and Marine Environmental Research (1775-1983). Over 4,000 references to scientific and technical literature on the biological and physical aspects, resources, conservation, and the impact of human activity on the marine environment. Produced by the ALECSO (Arab League Educational Cultural and Scientific Organization) Programme on the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA) and Unesco's Division of Marine Sciences, it was edited by Mr Allen Varley, of the Plymouth Marine Laboratory



(UK) and Dr. S.A. Morcos of Unesco. Introductory reviews (in English and Arabic) of the oceanography, geology, geophysics and biology, and a Bathymetric chart of the region, from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, are also included.

● ***Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Suez Canal: A Bibliography on Oceanographic and Marine Environmental Research, edited by Allen Varley and S.A. Morcos, Unesco/ALECSO, 1990, 279 pp., 95 FF.***

RAIN FOREST REGENERATION AND MANAGEMENT

Only a small proportion of tropical rain forest is currently managed in any real sense, according to one of the reports in this volume, number six in the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Book Series. So many factors - whether silvicultural, socio-economic, political or institutional - may, in fact, prevent success that many specialists discuss tropical forest management as unrealistic, unworkable or impratical. "*Examples are, however, available to help counter such scepticism*", writes Malcolm Hadley of Unesco MAB, one of the editors of this book which uses 22 case studies to complement thematic reviews. Its aim is to bridge the gap between the sciences associated with the wet tropics and on-the-ground management, by relating present knowledge on forest regeneration to management, identifying gaps in information and understanding in respect to both scientific hypotheses and management needs, and by exploring new directions for collaborative research and action.

● ***Rain Forest Regeneration and Management, edited by A. Gomez-Pompa, T.C. Whitmore and M. Hadley, MAB Book Series, Vol.6, Unesco/Parthenon Publishing, 457 pp., 340 FF.***

Publications and periodicals are on sale at the Unesco Bookshop, or by order from Unesco Press, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, and in Member States through national distributors.

UNESCO IN THE ROLE OF SANTA CLAUS

UNLOADING THE FIRST DELIVERY IN MINSK
(Photo Unesco/B. Lefevre).

On December 25 a Soviet Ilyushin 76, chartered by Unesco and laden with 35 tonnes of food, vitamins and school equipment touched down at Minsk in the Ukraine. For the children of Chernobyl, Unesco had put on a Santa Claus suit.

Operation "Christmas in Chernobyl" was launched as part of the international co-operation programme to offset the consequences of the nuclear power plant disaster in the Soviet republic of April 26, 1986. The educational material and food, collected in a few short weeks, were destined mainly for centres that recieve and treat children from the Chernobyl region affected by radioactivity from the accident.

"From one day to the next," explains Bruno Lefèvre, who heads the programme, *"these children found themselves in a prison with no bars. Since the accident they have not been able to go out, to live normally. Outside, flowers grow, birds sing, everything seems normal, but nothing is. They have been told 'The world surrounding you is dangerous', but they cannot understand why."*

The radioactive dust from the accident was carried on the winds, in rain and clouds. It fell by hazard. The children of Chernobyl are the victims of chance.

Carried out jointly with two German foundations (Welthilfe e. V. and International Hilsfonds e. V.), the "Christmas in Chernobyl" operation results from an appeal by Unesco to which western businesses, publishers, institutions and even the French army, which contributed five tonnes of milk and preserves, responded. In less than three weeks, the stocks were gathered, the logistics worked out, and the administrative obstacles removed. The Ilyushin was able to take off.

Hampered by particularly difficult climatic conditions, the supplies were nonetheless distributed to those Soviet Institutions most concerned with the catastrophe - two orphanages near Bryansk, a Ukrainian Dispensary specialized in the protection of the population and a research institute clinic. The Unesco-Chernobyl programme includes some 70 projects aimed at limiting the dramatic consequences of the catastrophe, which are becoming more and more visible. To this end, an agreement was signed January 9, by Unesco Director-General, Federico Mayor, and the Permanent Delegates from the USSR, Byelorussia and the Ukraine.

Max Cerrans

ART AT THE TOUCH OF A FINGERTIP

MICHELE AND FRANK DECONNINCK BRINGING ART TO THE BLIND
(Photo Unesco/Michel Claude).

Franck and Michèle Deconninck (Belgium) have never had any particular vocation to work with the blind. However, Franck, 45, physician and university professor and Michèle, 39, psychologist and amateur sculptor and painter, have come up with an ingenious new procedure which has given the blind access to graphic art.

Within the framework of the World Decade for Cultural Development, they organized, at Unesco Headquarters during the first half of January, an exhibition for the blind of some 100 original works by 70 Belgian artists.

As with all good ideas, their invention is simple. *"I came across a computer programme,"* says Franck, *"that transposed texts into braille, and persuaded the University of Brussels to open courses for blind students. The University would undertake the necessary preparation of material in braille. The first blind students enrolled in economics courses and needed access to graphics. This posed a problem we didn't know how to get around."*

The solution was found in a simple and cheap technique using a type of "plastic" paper which comprises a layer of micro-capsules of thermo-inflatable resine. The desired design can therefore be copied onto this paper which is then passed through an offset oven. The parts covered by ink swell under the effect of the heat giving the design its relief.

The procedure has proved extremely successful and in 1988, Foundation Feeling, sponsored by the Apple company, was created *"to promote and diffuse graphic art for the blind"*. Unesco also joined in with a contribution of $5,000. Following its success in Brussels and Paris, the exhibition will now travel to Cologne (Germany). Museums and cultural associations are now showing interest in this technique which has allowed those previously excuded, a new contact with art.

M.C.

● Tomorrow, another peace

"The wind of a new hope had begun to blow," wrote Unesco Director-General, Federico Mayor, in an article published January 25 in the French daily, Le Monde. But *"the fragile edifice"* put in place after World War II to build peace based on *"a conscious and responsible world citizenry"* has been shaken. For Mr. Mayor this has come about because *"peace in its globality has not been understood"*. Tomorrow, to be *"just and durable"*, peace must take into account *"those whom history has passed by"*, through increased *"dialogue, understanding and knowledge of the identities of each"*, *"by taking into better consideration the psychology of peoples"*, and giving as much attention to *"the spiritual dimension of development"* as to its sustainability.

YOU EDUCATE ... SON ... ATE A GIRL, AND YOU EDUCATE A NATION", SAYS A. IBN BADIS, AN ALGERIAN MUSLIM REFORMIST (Photo Unesco/D. Roger)

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR : HAS IT PAID OFF ?

International Literacy Year (ILY) 1990, proclaimed by the United Nations, with Unesco as lead organization, ended on December 31. During the Year, Unesco worked with Member States, sister UN agencies, other inter-governmental as well as non-governmental and voluntary organizations, and the media, to promote literacy around the world.

Did ILY attain its objectives and fulfil its promise? In this issue of Sources, a Member of the ILY Secretariat offers a preliminary assessment (below), Anil Bordia, India's Education Secretary, presents his point of view (p. 10) while Barber Conable, President of the World Bank, considers the situation from a different angle (p.14). The dossier also examines the evolution of illiteracy in the industrialized countries (p.11), and presents Ms Ghada Al-Jabi of Syria (p.9), one of 94 Honorary ILY Ambassadors. Finally, two pages of graphs (pp 12-13) show progress but also a clear view of the long road ahead.

ALL ARTICLES ARE FREE OF COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS SEE P. 3

What can we expect of an international year? During this one, International Literacy Year (ILY), Unesco prodded, pushed and above all, mirrored the world's conscience and commitment to literacy in particular, and education in general, as basic human rights. **Literacy matters** was the message, and everyone is concerned by its promotion.

ILY took place during a period of global economic crisis, at a time when major political and economic shifts were challenging the role of education in Europe and elsewhere. It also coincided with growing recognition of illiteracy in the industrialized countries where, until recently, the issue was viewed as non-existent or, at worst, confined to migrant or disadvantaged populations, and this new outlook made it possible to reinforce the North-South and East-West dialogue. All of these factors gave the Year particular pertinence and intensified the debate.

ILY had five main goals: to encourage action at top government levels; raise public awareness, especially of the high rate of illiteracy among women and the low rate of school participation among girls; mobilize all potential partners - NGOs, the media, industry, etc.; reinforce international cooperation and finally, muster forces for a 10-year Action Plan.

To help do the job, national ILY committees were formed in 110 countries, and 94 Honorary Ambassadors nominated. Two major world conferences were held, along with all kinds of events, exhibitions and countless meetings, organized at all levels worldwide, to launch programmes, including for research, prepare publications and exchange information. In many cases, the media led the way.

NO SINGLE APPROACH

Taking the world pulse in 1990 the ILY Secretariat and national committees recognized that a new, more open approach was necessary, that no single solution could be applied within or across countries. Programmes and strategies had to emanate from the perceived needs of individuals and their communities. Simple recipes and slogans like *"eradicate illiteracy by the year 2000"* were to be discarded in favour of a more complex message. Competitive strategies, like ranking countries according to simplistic literacy and illiteracy rates, also came under attack.

In short, ILY provided the opportunity for taking stock of the situation in a given country or group, then moving forward from that perhaps unique context. A number of industrialized countries in the Mediterranean Basin, for instance, are highly conscious of the inadequacies of their education structures to meet the needs of children and adults alike. To achieve full literacy, therefore, these countries need not necessarily pass through the same awareness-raising process as other industrialized countries which refuse to acknowledge the problem.

High-level national awareness also comes about in different ways. In the United Kingdom it grew from the grassroots through voluntary bodies and the media in the 1970s, while in France, a presidential mandate in the early 1980s focused attention on literacy needs as closely linked with poverty and youth unemployment.

As for raising the level of public awareness and involvement, the second goal of ILY, one of the most difficult jobs for international organizations was to find a clear language in which to communicate the issues to different countries and sectors of society, and the media didn't always help. Newspapers and television, in fact, too often presented stereotypes, dwelling on the shame and conveying an image which likened the illiterate adult to someone with an affliction like alcoholism. In reality, such an individual is usually a fully functioning family member who perceives these needs largely in terms of employment possibilities.

During ILY we tried to get beyond this negative approach, to encourage the involvement of adult learners in formulating goals. We also tried to convey the idea that for many groups the right to the written word has not been fully recognized. At various debates during the Year, it became

clear that for some peoples it was a matter of seeing how best oral cultures could be complemented by literacy. For others, the written word turned out to be a form of bilingualism. This may be true for immigrant or minority groups, or in multi-lingual societies where populations may learn to read and write in their mother tongues, but must become literate in a second language, possibly the official national language, to participate in the life of society. As another example, the deaf communicate within an authentic culture through sign language, but need the written word to participate in the world of the hearing.

One of the most successful efforts to include adult learners in the formulation of their aspirations was the Book Voyage organized by the International Task Force on Literacy (ITFL), a co-ordinating body of NGOs. Thousands of learners around the world thus communicated their thoughts in an immense undertaking culminating in an international book (see page 15) presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on December 10, 1990.

During ILY our Secretariat expanded the narrrow black-white notion of literacy vs illiteracy to look at literacy acquisition as a complex, life-long process. Everyone, at different stages in life will have new literacy needs.

The pressure to over-simplify, however, continues to be enormous. While literacy practitioners and school teachers are concerned with identifying and responding to needs, the call for accountability and statistics is overwhelming. Funding agencies want to know where and how effectively their money is being spent. The media want to strike the imagination with figures that shock. Yet, for Unesco, it became clearer than ever during ILY that there simply are no truly reliable statistics for cross-country comparison. Keeping tabs on literacy acquisition is far more complex than counting available doses of vaccine.

Unfortunately, the language of international organizations, such as Unesco, has in some ways contributed to the confusion. The work of Unesco, as well as many funding sources, is frequently broken up into "*projects*" or "*programmes*" which starting with "*literacy*" then moving to "*post-literacy*" may have a life-span of only a few months to a few years. Indeed, as the planet became a forum for literacy issues, notions like "*relapse into illiteracy*" or of exactly what constitutes "*post literacy*" provision came under scrutiny.

As the Year progressed, the spiralling interest in literacy issues was evident, particularly at the ILY Secretariat, which, during 1990, responded to some 200,000 requests for information. The momentum for a Decade of action was clearly gaining pace.

WHAT NOW ?

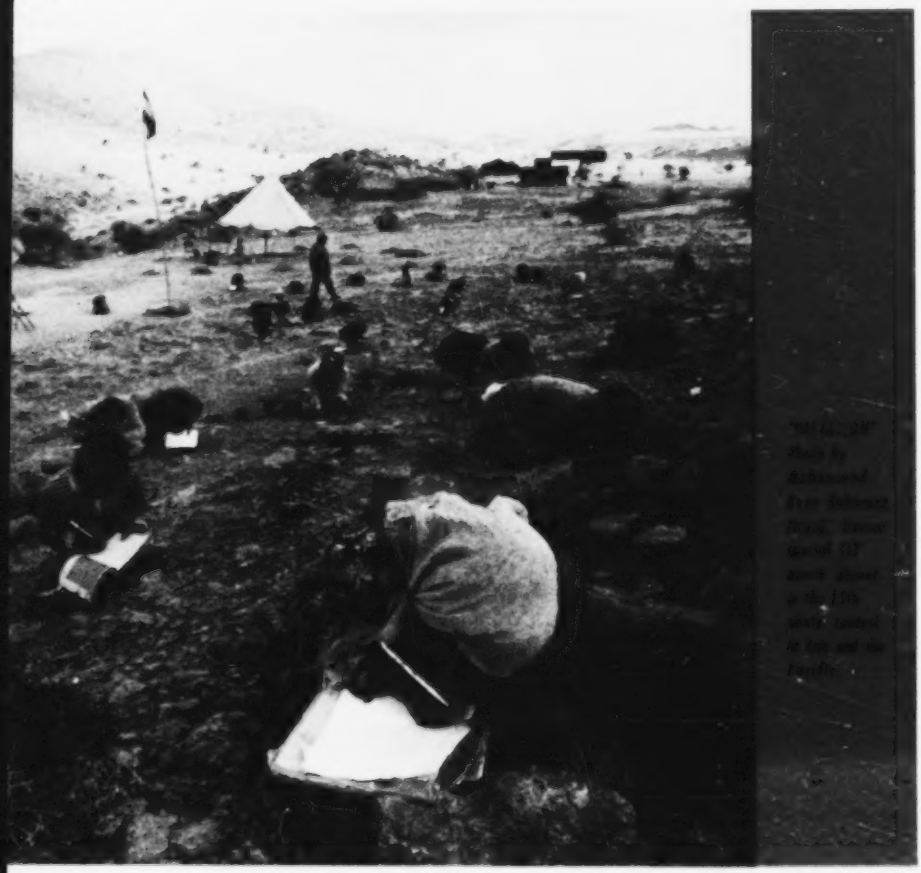
Given the present trends there is, of course, no realistic way to eliminate illiteracy by the year 2000. And, in any case, if we broaden our definition, we shall always have literacy needs. It is a matter of promoting literacy, not eradicating a "*scourge*", of enhancing people's communication possibilities without denying their cultural and linguistic identities.

During ILY, tight links and networks have been formed between and among a vast number of partners, including Unesco, other UN agencies, NGO's, the OECD, the EEC, the Council of Europe and other intergovernmental organizations, universities, national and regional bodies and the private sector. We must now work to consolidate these partnerships to keep literacy and basic education on national agendas over the long-term. Concrete steps forward will be radically different from group to group, country to country and from one form of international co-operation to another. But there is a new climate of openness marked by the conviction that we can all learn from each other.

Success may be gauged by the fact that many countries are now developing 10-year educational strategies and questioning their education systems, both formal and non-formal, more intensely. In the final analysis, the ILY balance sheet will be positive only if the Year leads to this kind of long-term commitment, ensuring that literacy for all is not subsumed under vague assurances, or short-term, market-expedient, educational goals.

Literacy is everyone's business and we must keep it that way!

LESLIE LIMAGE
ILY Secretariat



GHADA AL-JABI - HONORARY ILY AMBASSADOR

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Since, as Unesco insisted from the start, the success of ILY depended largely on what happened within each country, 94 leading figures in education and other fields were appointed Honorary Ambassadors to plan and participate in national and local events related to the Year.

In Syria, the choice of Ambassador was obvious. No one was better qualified than a small, dark-haired dynamo named Ghada Al-Jabi, one of the most effective and respected militants in the field. Director of Illiteracy Elimination in the Syrian Ministry of Culture since 1976, she had already in 1986 won a Nadezhda Krupskaya Prize, one of Unesco's coveted literacy awards, and today is prime mover of a *"Literacy and Civic Education for Women"* campaign, so successful that it is being hailed as a pilot project in the region and beyond.

"My nomination was like a consecration", she said. *"You can't imagine the reassurance, the confidence it brought - being given the right to speak in the name of Unesco"*.

Ghada Al-Jabi was born and raised, with her three brothers and two sisters, in a densely populated suburb of Damascus. *"My father, who held the important position of station master, was a kind, sincere person"*, she said, *"but it was my mother, a poet in her own right, who instilled us with a love for poetry and literature. She told us that if we could transform simple words into a song, the whole world would be touched by magic. I'm sure it's because of her that words have always been so important to me and that, in fact, I have devoted my life to making them, and everything hidden behind them, available to others."*

Ghada was a precocious child, who, by 15, had earned her baccalaureat, and by 19 had graduated from Damascus University, ready to move on towards several higher degrees in education. Around that time (1960), an estimated 87.9% of Syrian women and 53% of men were illiterate.

"I had a burning desire to combat this situation", she said, *"but learnt very early that the individual is powerless if not incorporated into a broader structure, an organization or institution"*. Today, embued with deep political commitment, she is convinced that *"working towards my country's educational goals is a civic, in fact a patriotic duty"*. In addition to the Culture

Ministry, she is a Member of the Board of the Syrian Union of Women, and the International Council of Adult Education (Canada), and also travels widely as Syria's Delegate to international conferences.

As such, Ms Al-Jabi celebrated her 51st birthday last fall among colleagues and friends in Frunze, Kirghiz SSR, at a Unesco seminar (November 26 - December 1) on "Literacy for Girls and Women in Islamic Societies and Countries with an Important Islamic Cultural Component".

"Besides being 'dynamic' and 'full of life', Ghada has an exceptional gift for communicating with others", says Maria-Luisa Jauregui de Gainza of Unesco's ILY Secretariat, who was also at the conference. *"She is so articulate and speaks with such conviction, especially about her current project, that everyone is captivated.*

PILOT PROJECT

In her report on the Frunze seminar, Krystyna Chlebowska, a Unesco Specialist in Basic Education for Women and Girls, recommended publication of a monograph on *"this good pilot project"* which she termed *"particularly important at a time when the issue of women in Islamic societies is so crucial"*.

Since Ms Al-Jabi assumed her position, illiteracy in Syria has decreased considerably. In 1985, it affected 56% of women (25.8% of men). In 1990, the rate was down to 49.2% (21.7% for men).

Dr Najati Al-Bukhari (Jordan), an education specialist, was commissioned by Unesco *"to evaluate""* the project, based in two districts near Damascus, which, between 1985 and 1989, benefitted from technical and financial support through the Organization's Bureau for Education in the Arab States (UNEDBAS).

"I spent 11 days there", he said, *"much of the time with Ms Al-Jabi, a unique, efficient woman and an excellent administrator to whom this project owes its success"*.

In his report, he calls the project *"innovative"* because, besides literacy, it provides women with legal and civics education, and vocational skills (dress making, hair dressing, typing, etc.). Among reasons for its success, he cites notably a long preliminary campaign sensitizing the entire community; and the role of the mosque where, after the Imam's sermon at Friday prayers, a project officer might offer information, then read a few verses from the Koran calling for the pursuit of knowledge as the duty of every Moslem, male and female.

"It has already resulted in far stricter enforcement of the Compulsory Primary Education Law, especially for girls", he wrote, *"and has been very effective in changing attitudes, particularly among men who now increasingly send their wives, daughters and sisters to classes."*

"I have visited many literacy projects in Arab countries, but none with such positive results", said Dr Al-Bukhari. *"All of these countries could benefit from the Syrian example."*

"Unfortunately", he added, *"there's only one Ghada Al-Jabi"*.

BETTY WERTHER
with THANA'A UMAN, Damascus

GREAT EXPECTATIONS... BUT

As in many other domains, the developing world suffers most acutely from the problem of illiteracy. Consequently, much of the thrust of ILY was directed at these countries. Has the effort paid off? India's Education Secretary and ardent literacy campaigner in the international arena, Anil Bordia, spoke to Sources on the achievements, and failures, of ILY in his country and the rest of the developing world.

The launch of the International Literacy Year raised many expectations in developing countries, including a far more concerted effort by governments; stepped up internal resources for literacy and basic education; creating an environment to generate enthusiasm among learners and instructors and more resources and technical assistance from inter-governmental and bilateral sources.

These expectations were reinforced at the Conference on Education for All at Jomtien where Unesco, UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank and other donor countries as well as a large number of voluntary organizations, teachers representatives and, most important of all, distinguished leaders from the developing world pledged to wage a determined struggle against illiteracy.

MEASURES... MORE VOCAL THAN REAL

Unfortunately, the measures taken by the inter-governmental organizations have been more vocal than real. No monitoring system was set up to persuade developing countries to divert their energies and resources to what they so eloquently pledged. And while inter-governmental organizations have shown their willingness to allocate *some* additional resources to basic education, indications are that external aid from well-known donor countries may actually be going down.

Much the same can be said of the leaders of developing countries who, at every meeting of importance have vied with one another to demonstrate their commitment to primary education and literacy. However, the general feeling is that each country ought to do a great deal more.

In India, our record is not too bad. While cuts have been made in almost all sectors, primary education and literacy have been spared. The allocation for literacy has actually increased by 25%, and, while the outlay for adult literacy is a paltry $80 million, new measures have evolved to tackle the problem such as the involvement of popular organizations and the use of cultural factors to mobilise people. With the programmes undertaken in states such as Kerala and Gujarat, or Pondicherry and Goa, early 3.5 million people will have been made literate by in the 12 months to the end of India's fiscal year in March. It my be a small step in the huge task that lies before us but it is certainly a manifestation of will.

There has also been a change in strategy to generate enthusiasm for literacy, with a move away from traditional adult education centres run through part-time instructors to the use of volunteers in a well defined area and working within a time frame, usually of a year. Voluntary organizations, cultural troupes, electronic and person to person contact are used as methods for creating an environment in which volunteers and learners, indeed the entire community, are encouraged to join literacy programmes. A new pedagogy of concentrated literacy training, with stress on attaining pre-determined levels in the three R's has also been worked out.

In the longer term, and in the context of the Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1995) educational planners in India have paid particular attention to revamping the present strategy for universal primary education. Presently, less than 55% of children complete the five compulsory years of schooling. The new strategy will involve the community in a house to house survey for determining the kind of primary education most appropriate for a particular family or group of families and for ensuring access for all to primary education. Likewise, universal participation will lead groups of concerned villagers to homes of families where children have dropped out. Special attention is being paid as well to laying down minimum levels of learning which must be achieved by all children before they complete primary education. These programmes have so far been initiated in three states.

The challenge in India is gigantic. ILY has made it possible to cause a stir, to create big waves in small areas and ripples throughout the country and to raise awareness about what we are denying our young adults and children; an awareness which will, perhaps, inspire people to come together to organize their own basic education with the help of local teachers. Government will come in with the financial resources to the extent it can.

Interviewed by
LATIKA PADGAONKAR (India)

"A HANDLE TO OPEN DOORS - AND MONEY BAGS"

For Dr Mary Hamilton of Lancaster University (UK), a leading authority and frequent consultant for Unesco on illiteracy in the industrialized countries, ILY provided the occasion for these countries, both East and West, to *"draw closer together in their awareness of a common problem"*. *"This, in turn"*, she added in a conversation with **Sources**, *"accelerated the trend towards a better assessment of needs and causes for literacy difficulties"*.

"A number of countries carried out comprehensive surveys and put substantial amounts of money into innovation and research", she said, notably citing Canada and Australia where, because of national policies and initiatives, these types of activity have increased *"phenomenally"* in recent years, and *"skyrocketed"* during ILY.

Hamilton said it was hard to make comparisons, and to judge the exact extent to which ILY had increased government support, but insisted that *"we in Great Britain were quite jealous of the funds available for literacy work in Canada and Australia. Yet even here in the UK which is not in Unesco, ILY was a kind of lever, a handle to open doors - and money bags"*.

In just published *"Researching Literacy in Industrialized Countries: Trends and Prospects"*, commissioned by Unesco's Institute for Education (UIE) in Hamburg (FRG), Dr Hamilton and her colleague, David Barton, also with the Literacy Research Group at Lancaster, distilled their findings into a number of trends, the first of which centred on what she described above as a better assessment of needs and causes.

NEW VIEWS VS OLD MYTHS

A second trend, also accentuated during ILY, was identified by the researchers, both of whom have backgrounds in linguistics and adult education, as a shift in definitions and views, in research as well as practice, towards what they call a *"social view"* of literacy.

"Yet in this aspect", she explained, *"heightened awareness in the general population and especially the media highlighted conflicts between old myths and new views and understandings developing in the field. Unfortunately, the media too often referred to illiteracy in terms of falling standards, in ways which were unhelpful to moving forward on the issue"*.

"During ILY there was far greater media coverage", she said, *"and this was excellent in raising public awareness, but there were contradictions. When, because of misunderstandings, the press used negative terminology, the portrayal of the illiterate was often damaging to the very people we're trying to help"*.

Hamilton said that, in general, UK efforts have been muted because of lack of government involvement. *"The UK is not a member of Unesco"*, she repeated. *"Our national agency, the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU), had limited funds. It nonetheless staged three weeks of awareness-raising at different times during the year, each devoted to a theme: work, young people and parenting"*.

"Local groups were the most active. Providing they could raise their own funds, they staged exhibitions and different forms of meetings in which students and teachers met with the public, often for readings of student-written materials".

The Adult Basic Education Service in Leicester produced a pack of materials for literacy learners describing the situation in other countries. *"While this kind of information is generally available to teachers or at the policy level"*, said Hamilton, *"sharing it with students is indicative of a new emphasis on learner participation"*.

In addition to making practical links, *"ILY encouraged us to see our activities in a global context, and to appreciate the worldwide crisis, especially in funding,"* said Hamilton, who in 1990 even went to check out the situation in Nepal.

"Of course the picture is radically different in countries where literacy is a mass problem", she said, *"but there are common issues, like minority cultures and languages. We can help each other. It was important for us , in Nepal, to see how people communicate in other cultures. There are many ways of communicating. Take sign language - among monks, otherwise sworn to silence, in monasteries, or signals like those used for betting on race tracks ... Literacy is only one way"*.

A major effort was made to link literacy work in the UK with that being done in other countries, particularly in the *"South"*.

Literacy learners in Newcastle, for instance, set up Pen Pal arrangements with learners in developing countries. In Derbyshire, a one-day conference was devoted to connections between literacy in the UK and the developing world and establish links, including financial, with the literacy campaign in Namibia. Funds were raised, for instance, to purchase a bicycle for a literacy supervisor there.

For Dr Hamilton, who has been involved in literacy teaching since the 1970s, gradually building the research side, and extending her expertise nationally and internationally, ILY was a time for *"gaining a better understanding of what we're doing and broadening the issues so that, finally, we can start working from a common analysis on what needs to be done"*.

B. W.

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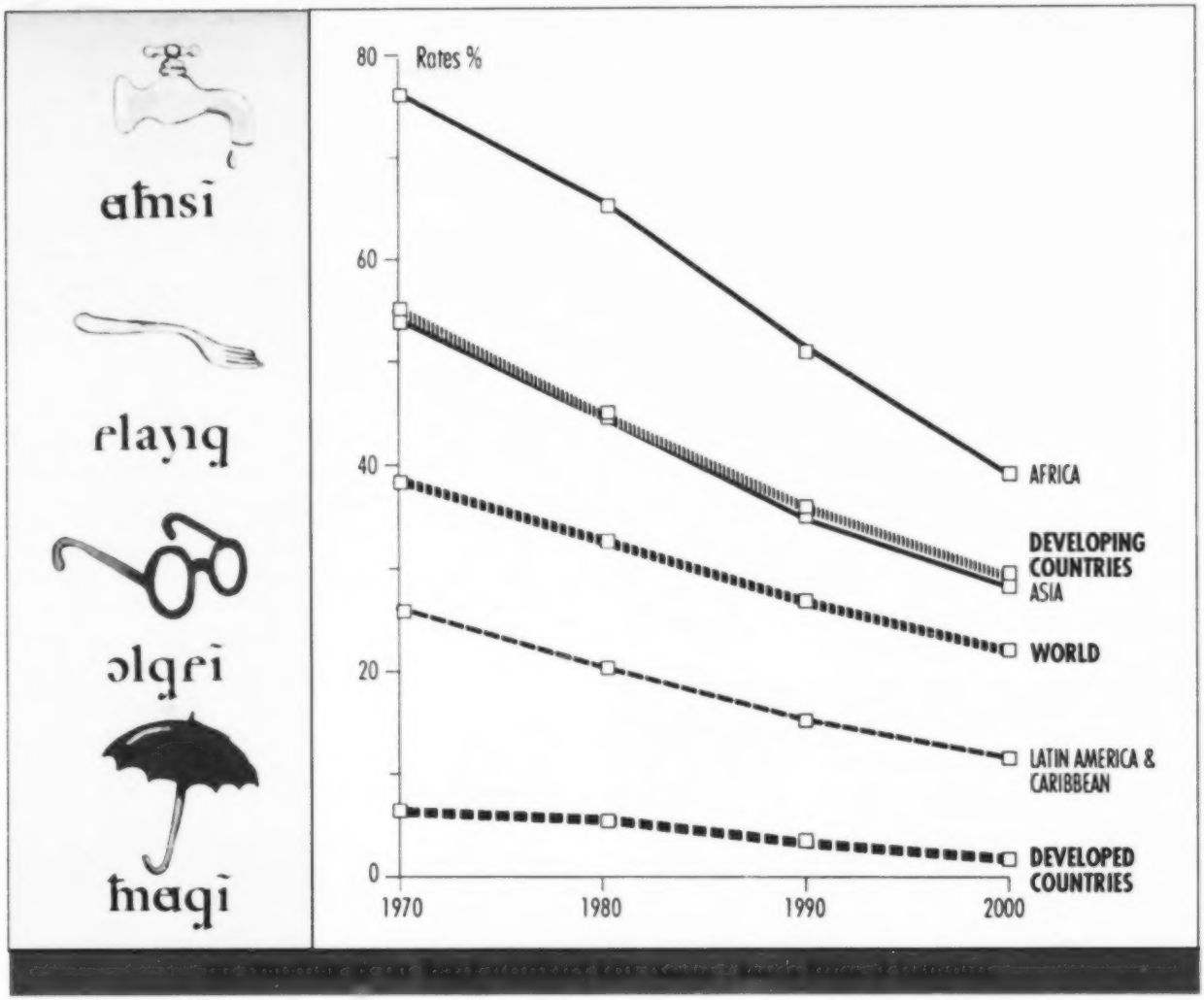
MOVING AHEAD... BUT SLOWLY



ILLITERACY RATE HALVES... BUT

Over the past 20 years the rate of illiteracy in all regions of the world has steadily fallen from a high in 1970 of 38.5% to 26.5% in 1990. If present trends continue, it is expected to drop further to 21.8% by the year 2000. However, this also means that more than one person in five over the age of 15 years, will still not be able to read or write.

In absolute numbers, there has been little change, although it seems that the peak at least has been passed . The figures climbed slightly from 890 million illiterates in 1970 to 948 million in 1990 and should fall to an estimated 935 million by the turn of the century.

In the industrialized countries, progress has been fairly constant, falling from 6.2% in 1970 to 3.3% - which still amounts to more than 31 million - in 1990 and reaching 1.5% by the year 2000.

Latin America and the Caribbean form the only region in the developing world that, in the past decade, has crossed the threshold of 20% (26.2% in 1970 to 15.3% in 1990) beyond which full literacy can be self-sustainable.

Asia has made considerable progress with illiteracy falling to 35.2% in 1990 from a high of 55.4% in 1970. Despite this, Asia still accounts for about three quarters of the world's illiterates (700 million).

(Graphics : A. Darmon. Poster from Unesco Centrum Nederland).

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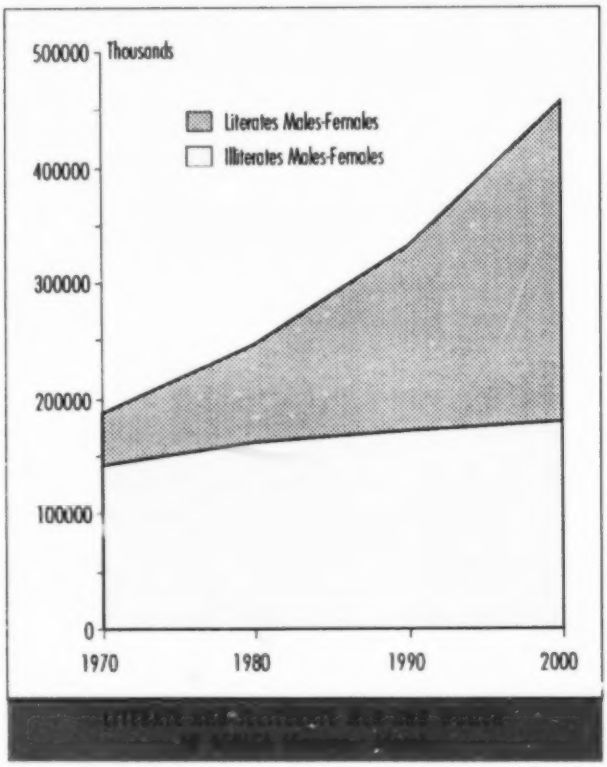


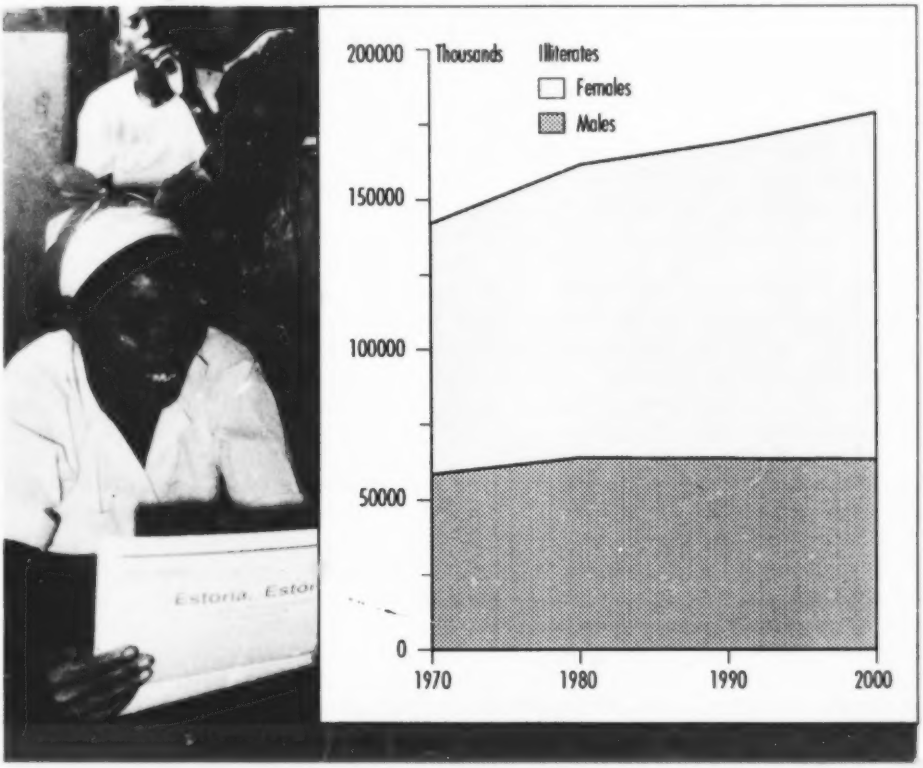
THE PARADOX OF AFRICA

Africa presents a special case. The continent has scored a major achievement in the past 20 years with its literate population climbing from 23.8% in 1970 to 48.3% in 1990, almost quadrupling the number of people who can read and write (44.5 million in 1970 to 160.5 million in 1990). On the other hand, in comparison with the rest of the developing world, Africa has continued to mark the highest level of illiteracy, with those who are unable to read and write outnumbering those who can. The number of illiterates is expected to increase again before the end of this decade. Demographic growth partly explains this phenomenon, however the main factor was terrible lack of educational material. The fact that African governments had to start their educational programmes from scratch, suffering a terrible lack of means and material.

(Graphics : A. Darmon)

AFRICAN WOMEN DISADVANTAGED

The situation in Africa is also due to the fact that education is more accessible for men than for women, as this graph reveals. Since 1980 the number of illiterate men has begun to fall slightly. However the number of illiterate women has continued to climb, albeit more slowly.



(Graphics : A. Darmon
Photo : Unesco/Dominique Roger).

"A REAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT"

Education is expensive, and many countries in the developing world rely heavily on funding agencies for help in this area. Of these the World Bank is the biggest. Bank President, Barber Conable, outlines the "lenders" point of view.

During the Jomtien Conference, you confirmed that "*education is the key to development*". Has this always been the Bank's position?

Lending for education has constituted a central part of the Bank's total assistance package since the early 1960s. The Bank's aim is to support investments that promote sustained long-term social and economic development, and, for many reasons, success in this area depends crucially on the level of education attained by a country's population. First, reducing poverty is at the heart of the development process. By equipping the poor to indentify and seize opportunities, education provides the indispensable segment of the bridge that allows them to cross the gulf from misery to hope. Second, investments in education contribute as much - and often more - to economic progress as investments in roads, power plants, irrigation canals, or other physical capital. Third, education strengthens national identity, deepens social and cultural roots, and enhances the ability of citizens to participate in the development process. Fourth, education - especially of girls and women - has a powerful beneficial impact on family welfare through its effect on health and nutrition, and on fertility levels.

How do you explain that less than 0.5% of international aid goes to primary education?

One reason for their past neglect is that donors considered their comparative advantage to be in more traditional infrastructure sectors. Another is that, within the education sector, donors preferred to support certain types of investment projects: those that are capital and foreign exchange intensive; that are limited in number, scope and geographic dispersion to facilitate supervision; and that are heavily dependent on the expertise of the donor country. This kind of assistance is quite suitable for tertiary and secondary education, but not for primary education where schools are highly dispersed, the cost of each school small from an international donors' perspective, with no single school enjoying high visibility, and the major expenditure item is teacher salaries.

The necessity to build strong, sustainable and good quality basic education argues strongly for changes in these aid patterns to favour primary education. These changes are already taking place. First, many bilateral donors that earlier gave little attention to education are now getting involved, and then, following the Jomtien conference, there are has been a marked increase in the attention given to primary education.

Where can developing countries expect to find supplementary resources necessary for education while trying to cope with the economic crisis that has afflicted them?

Unless governments place high priority on education, donors are not likely to either. That being said, countries are taking courageous measures to face the economic problems confronting them. Still, some of the poorest will need increased external aid to prevent stagnation in the development of their human resources. In Jomtien, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank committed themselves to substantial increases in their assistance to basic education, and our feeling is that many bilateral donors will do the same.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have, until now, supported policies of "*structural adjustment*". Will the Bank modify its position on this issue?

In the short term, structural adjustment programmes often affect growth in public sector activities. This may affect social sectors, including education, in cases where adjustment programmes do not include specific measures to protect them. I am happy to say that such measures are now increasingly common. It is important to keep in mind that adjustment programmes became necessary in order to ward off a very serious deterioration of the economy which, if allowed to continue, would have had an even more disastrous impact on the education system. In the longer term, these programmes will help promote the growth which can help to finance the education effort. Finally, in addition to measures included in "*structural adjustment*" loans to ensure adequate staffing and funding of the education sector, the World Bank finances programmes addressing the specific needs of this sector. Thus, in Fiscal Year 1990, World Bank lending for education and training was the largest in the Bank's history - US$2,062 million or 9.9% of total Bank lending.

Up until what point is the Bank prepared to co-operate with other international organizations involved in education?

All of us who work for international development agencies are at the service of our clients, and we need to co-operate closely to improve the quality of our service. World Bank staff actively work with other agencies and in FY 1990 almost half of all Bank education projects had co-financing from a wide range of bilateral and multilateral sources; this compares to about one-third of the projects in the recent past.

Do those in the economic milieu share the Bank's position on the question of Education for All?

Research from developing countries points to a powerful beneficial impact of basic education and literacy on factors such as agricultural productivity, returns on investments in physical capital, health, nutrition, and fertility, as well as on certain social, political and personal values that promote economic and social development. Donors like their money to be effectively invested: investment in education provides a real return for the lifetime of the recipient. □

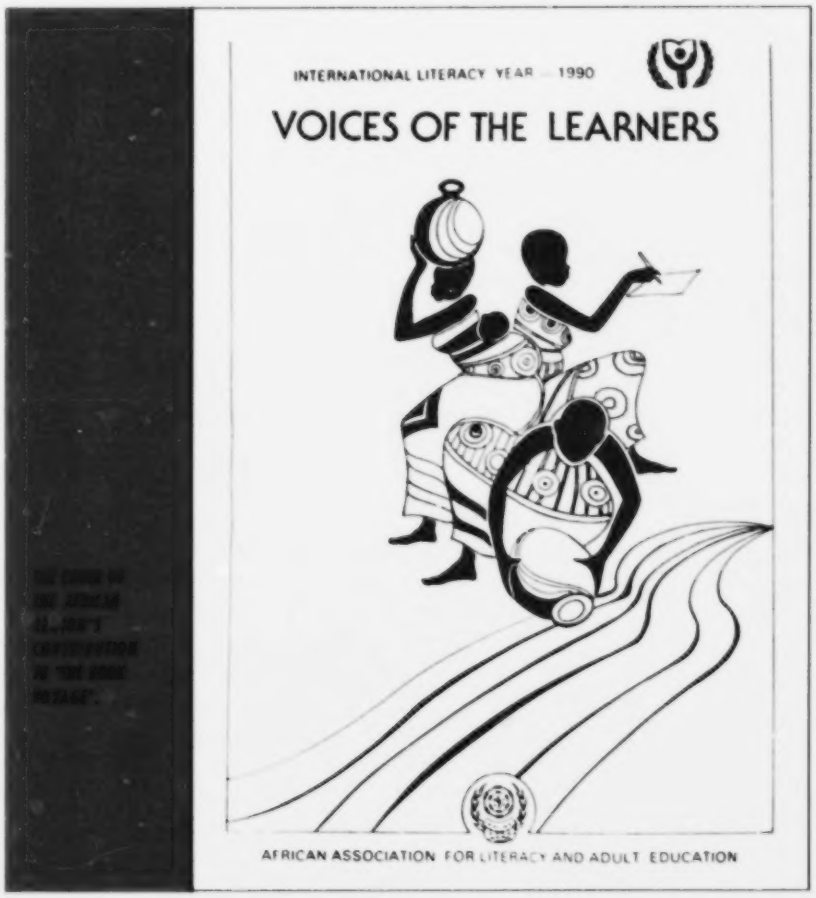
SOLIDARITY, INNOVATION AND NEW OPENINGS

"God knows there's been a lot of 'international years', but this time we were able to go beyond the hype," says David Kahler from the non-governmental organization, World Education. *"International Literacy Year has galvanized public opinion on this issue and this has translated into widespread support."*

"One of the major gains of ILY," agrees Sergiusz Najar of the International Union of Students, *"is the political will that governments around the world are now starting to show in support of literacy. This is particularly clear in the countries of Eastern Europe, where illiteracy has been seen as something shameful in the past and therefore swept under the carpet, hidden from public view."*

These reactions are typical of the response given by many of the Non-Governmental Organizations working in education, when asked about ILY. Although they acknowledge that, numerous promises aside, the Year has not yet seen any major increase in funding for literacy or reordering of government spending priorities, a new "spirit" has been created. It is far too early yet, they say, to expect concrete results in the field, but all are confident that the seeds sown in 1990 will yield their fruit.

"We have used 1990 to strengthen our base and launch into a decade of activities aimed at making literacy available to everyone," explains Najar. *"It can be seen as a springboard..."*.



A VITAL LINK

The NGOs, of which there are several hundred linked to Unesco and working in the educational domain around the world, are a vital link in passing the message of literacy. They constitute an international corps of competent, highly motivated people who work at a grass-roots level in some of the farthest flung corners of the globe. Consequently they have a direct contact with the people with whom they are sharing their knowledge and expertise, and can better see and understand their needs. It's for this reason that Unesco has strengthened its cooperation with these organizations. Once a year, for example, Unesco organizes a Collective Consultation of NGOs to evaluate and select projects proposed by different organizations for presentation to funding agencies. Then, to coordinate efforts during ILY an InternationalTask Force for Literacy comprising some 30 NGOs along with national organizations and various foundations, was established. Out of the Task Force came such projects as the "Book Voyage", for which stories, poems, songs, cartoons and drawings were collected from learners in different communities around the world. These contributions were compiled to make up regional books, from which a selection was drawn to prepare an international edition. Being able to participate in this project not only raised people's awareness, it also changed perceptions and helped create a remarkable link between communities all over the world.

"Up until this project," says Btebe Bakumba from the NGO, ELIMU (Knowledge, Instruction, Formation), which runs an adult education project in south-eastern Zaire, *"our learners thought they stood alone in a literate world. When they realized, through the Book Voyage, that there were millions and millions of others everywhere in the same boat, their whole vision changed; they no longer felt isolated."*

OPENING DOORS

The feeling of solidarity generated by ILY has also allowed the NGOs to develop new partnerships and open doors that were previously closed. One shining example of this has occurred in Laos where the Government has teamed up with Unesco and the French organization, Ecoles Sans Frontières, on a literacy project for women belonging to ethnic minority groups in the north of the country.

"The aim of the project is to improve the quality of life for these women who have received basic literacy training, but who

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have not had a chance to use and develop their skills," explains project supervisor, Christian Richard. *"The programme incorporates post-literacy training through the teaching of work skills, such as silk production and aquaculture, that will allow them to gain some extra income. At the end of the training period, each of the 200 women involved will be asked to present a project for which she will be given a "grant' of $50 to get started. This acts both as a stimulus to continue the work and a means of evaluating the training.*

Laos is a country that has been forgotten by the rest of the world for years, and the implementation of such a project there is quite an achievement. It must be acknowledged that ILY helped create the conditions necessary to do it."

Another such opening occurred in El Salvador, where the Catholic Church was able to launch a "Literacy by Radio" project. The students, made up mainly of the rural community and including 9,000 women, tuned in to broadcasts that taught basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills, which were accompanied by individual studies and weekly group sessions.

This type of innovation, born out of an acute need and a painful lack of resources, has been another of the hallmarks of the action undertaken by NGOs throughout the Year. In the U.S, for example, the International Reading Association (IRA) launched a campaign to have areas in public places such as railway stations, airports, town halls and government offices designated as *Readers areas* - zones that need not be elaborate or costly, but which should be comfortable, and as far as possible, quiet.

FINE SPEECHES

The NGOs are justifiably pleased with the response to their efforts, but stress that success requires more than their enthusiasm and commitment.

"Certainly, on a human level, ILY has been an extraordinary experience, and a lot of goodwill has been shown by our governments," says Bakumba. *"But, as yet, this good will, in many parts of the developing world, has been mostly verbal."* The ELIMU project, which ties literacy to community development, has survived and succeeded thanks to a handful of dedicated local specialists and the support of several international NGOs, but remains constrained by financial difficulties, a lack materials and the general poverty suffered by the region's inhabitants; the scenario is all too common.

The NGO's have thus used ILY to put the issue of literacy into the spotlight. For them, it has meant a new solidarity, openings, and innovation - solid foundations for the future. Now, they say, the ball is in the court of the world's decision makers and bankers, who must show that the fine speeches and noble promises of support made during International Literacy Year were not just empty rhetoric.

SUE WILLIAMS

TO FIND OUT MORE ...

COMPENDIUM OF STATISTICS ON ILLITERACY - 1990 Edition: No. 31, in the series Statistical reports and studies, presents data on illiteracy derived from national censuses and surveys and classified by age, sex and population sub-groups. *Trilingual, English, French and Spanish.*

LITERACY LESSONS: Prepared especially for ILY by the International Bureau of Education. This series of 40 brochures written by 40 authors from around the world takes stock of our present knowledge about the pitfalls and successes of teaching, reading and writing.

DIRECTORY OF FOUNDATIONS: A list of Foundations in 20 countries which have expressed interest in funding literacy projects for disadvantaged populations. *ILY Secretariat.*

ILY: YEAR OF OPPORTUNITY. A 46-page brochure with striking illustrations identifies the issues and provides a series of suggestions for moving towards a solution. *ILY Secretariat, 1990.*

ONE BILLION ILLITERATES: A challenge for our time. *The Unesco Courier*, July 1990, examines all the complex aspects of the problem.

THE CHALLENGE 1990. A 16-page magazine, published by the ILY Secretariat, focuses on literacy for women, the single most important factor in reducing infant mortality. The newsletter points out that one out of three women cannot read and write and over 60% of children out of school are girls.

THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY: Functional Illiteracy in Industrialized Countries, by Jean-Pierre Vélis. The plight of an increasing number of people who have attended school, but cannot read, write or count well enough to cope with the demands of modern society. *Unesco, 1990, 137 pp.*

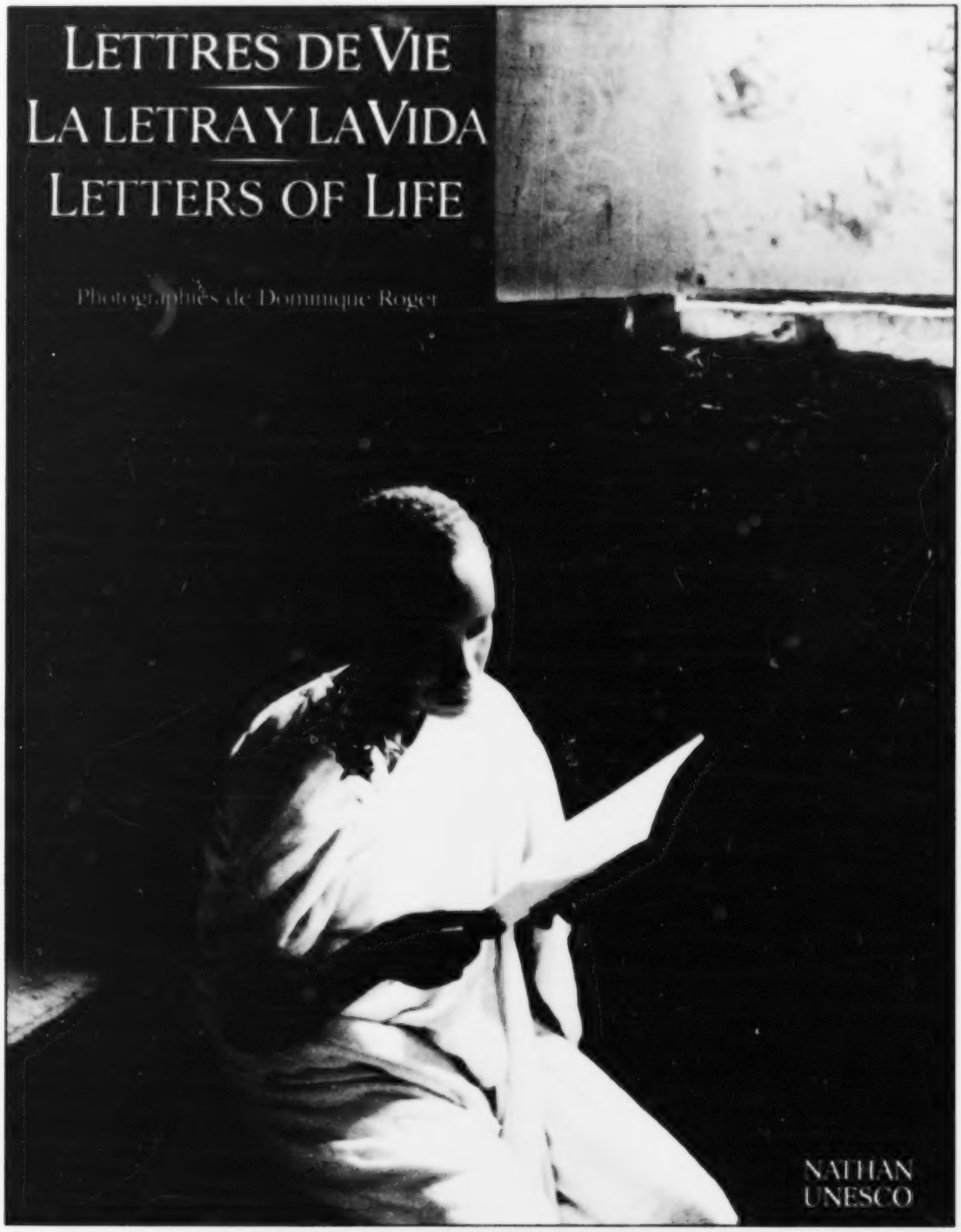
LITERACY FOR RURAL WOMEN IN THE THIRD WORLD, by Krystyna Chlebowska. Sets the scene and analyses a problem which affects over 500 million women. *Unesco, 1990, 146 pp.*

EDUCATION MATTERS. A 14-minute video prepared especially for ILY. Uses examples of adult literacy classes and primary schools around the world, to show what is being done for the nearly one billion illiterates around the world. *Available from the Audio-visual Production Division.*

LITERACY : A catalogue of 12 Co-Action literacy projects focusing on disadvantaged groups such as refugees, women and the handicapped in the least developed countries. *Catalogue and instructions on how to contribute available from Unesco-Co-Action Programme.*

LITERACY AND ILLITERACY IN THE WORLD : Situation, Trends and Prospects, by Sema Tanguiane. International Yearbook of Education, Vol. XLII -1990. IBE, Unesco, 1990, 163 pp.

FROM LITERACY TO EDUCATION FOR ALL : The Critical Decade (1990-1999), Open File in *Prospects*, Unesco's quarterly review of education, No. 72, 1989.



52 PHOTOS BY DOMINIQUE ROGER
52 MESSAGES BY WORLD PERSONALITIES
TO TURN THE SPOTLIGHT
ON LITERACY

Trilingual
English, French, Spanish
128 pages, format 24-32,
250 FF
NATHAN-UNESCO

"ANIMALS IN DAILY LIFE" IS THE THEME OF THE 16TH PHOTO CONTEST organized by the Asian Cultural Centre for Unesco (ACCU). The contest is open to both amateur and professional photographers in Asia and the Pacific and entries can be submitted up until May 31. The winning photos will be presented in a travelling photo exhibition which will visit Member States in the region.

The exhibition of winning photos from last year's contest on "Education for All" is being presented for the first time in Japan this month. The three top prizes in this contest were awarded to Mr. Phan Canh (Vietnam), Mr. Waseem Owaisi (Pakistan) and Mr. Liu Wan Tian (China)

☛*ACCU, 6 Fukuromachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162, Japan*

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THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC TEAM TRAVELLING the second of Unesco's Silk Roads expeditions along the Maritime Route has lent its weight to the theory that a major land route once crossed the Malay Peninsula in Southern Thailand, linking the ancient ports of Takua Pa facing the Andaman Sea and Chaiya in the Gulf of Siam..

The expedition travelled the hypothetical route to examine first hand the evidence supporting the theory, and has recommended greater international co-operation to further investigations in this area.

HANDS OFF MY ISLAND !

Formentera is the southern-most island of the Balearic archipelago. It possesses one town hall, located in the district of San Francisco Javier, and constitues the sole island municipality in the State of Spain. It has a population of five thousand which, with the influx of tourists, quadruples during the summer months.

As a result of its special geographical situation, it has one of the most fragile ecological systems in the Mediterranean. Unesco first became involved with the island in 1984, through the MAB (Man and the Biosphere) Programme, including Formentera in its work on Mediterranean island microsystems. Then, in June 1989, the Formentera Unesco Club was founded, growing out of the Association of Friends of Formentera, a cultural association whose membership included a number of foreigners enamoured with the island.

"From the start we decided we would deal with a variety of themes covering geographical, geological and ecological issues on the island," explains Association and Unesco Club President, Francesc Negre. *"Many of our initial projects got no further than the drawing board, partly because new and more specialized associations were established that have taken on some of these tasks. Thus we have concentrated on specific topics."*

"MORAL STRENGTH"

According to Negre, the idea of linking the Association to Unesco was first thought of in rather vague terms, but after contact had been made with the Catalan Federation of Unesco Clubs, it became apparent that the objectives of the two groups were similar. *"In addition, Unesco offered international prestige, and its moral strength outweighed the political strength of States. When, for instance, we talk with the authorities, we mention Unesco, not from the point of view of the island but because we think that its concerns are those of the entire world."*

When in 1984 it was announced that building operations would begin in the north-eastern part of Formentera, in Can Marroig, Punta Pedrera and Estany de Peix, a citizens' movement rose up in protest against this "prestige development", planned by Spanish and Italian businessmen. French sociologist Raymond Laffargue, who worked with Unesco, played a leading role in establishing the Formentera Association for the Development of the MAB Programme. A meeting, attended by recognized experts in various fields and from different backgrounds, was organized to lay the scientific foundations for achieving a reasonable balance between the development of tourism on the island and environmental protection.

Local town-planning regulations prohibiting any kind of high-rise building on the island, protect the area in question from urbanization, however recently passed laws allowing for the development of a golf course there could well be used by promoters as a pretext to push through plans for a 600-room hotel for golfers.

A PRIME TARGET

In June 1989, the project to have Formentera listed as a World Heritage Site was examined by Unesco in Benin. Thus, the Unesco Club came into being with the clearly-defined task of promoting this plan. To this end the "First Unesco Meeting on Formentera, a World Treasure", was held on the island from 19 to 21 January 1990. Out of the discussions held at this meeting came a series of alternatives for the island's wetlands, which had been abandoned by salt miners in the early 80s because of

Formentera is just one of several small islands in the Mediterranean working with MAB to solve their environmental problems. The MAB programme in this area has a twofold objective.

The first is to assess the social, economic and environmental conditions for a balanced development of these ecosystems, taking into account their inherent fragility and their often marginal status in relation to the continental countries to which they belong.

The second is to provide information useful to the islanders themselves as well as to local and national decision makers on whose actions their future will depend. To achive this MAB supports such activities as exchange programmes for research workers and island planners, regional technical seminars, training workshops and comparative studies.

insufficient profits. An exhaustive study was also made of two natural lakes which communicate with the sea in the north and north-east. This whole area is a prime target for real estate promoters, despite the opposition of ecologists who have emphasized the importance of its fauna and flora and its role as a resting place for numerous species of migratory birds on their way to warmer lands.

The club members pushing for World Heritage listing believed that obtaining Unesco's backing would increase their chances of protecting the environment, which would come to be viewed as being more important by local policy-makers.

"I think it most commendable that a group of individuals should come up with ideas and recommendations as to how to solve certain outstanding problems," says Formentera's mayor, Vicente Serra. *"It is highly significant and encouraging that this is taking place in a spirit of dialogue and understanding without any major upsets. Furthermore, the collaboration of Unesco experts in matters concerning the protection of the environment adds prestige to the work being done by the club."*

"The town council needs to be given ideas, because we are often up to our necks in immediate problems and do not look to the future. Nevertheless, I have to say that some of the recommendations put forward are little more than wishful thinking and cannot be put into effect at present, although it may be possible to implement some of them within a few years. To sum up, we continue to be open to any suggestions from this association, which is doing some very good work on behalf of the island."

The recommendations drawn up at the end of the first Unesco meeting included a request to the Parliament of the Balearic Islands to *"approve a list of natural sites containing the following : the complex formed by the saltmarshes of Estany Pudent, Estany des Peix and Can Marroig ; Cabo de Berberia and the Migjorn dunes ; and the Mola headland with its cliffs and torrents."*

Although everyone agrees about the great ecological and scenic value of these areas, the parliament has not yet taken any decision for its protection. In the meantime, the Unesco Club has scheduled a second meeting this February as it continues the search for practical solutions to the pressing problem of how to balance tourism development and protection of the environment.

CARMELO CONVALIA,
Formentera

CELTIC ART, A MAGNIFICENT, BRILLIANTLY ILLUSTRATED BOOK, co-published by Unesco and Flammarion, is devoted to Celtic Civilization from its emergence around 500 B.C. to its extension to Ireland and Britain, to the Balkans and as far as Anatolia.
Prepared by international specialists, the 170-page book gives a chronological account of Celtic society and culture through its beautiful art and everyday objects: decorated weapons, pottery, personal ornaments and enamelled bronze and silver, displaying highly developed craft skills.
Celtic Art, part of a new collection presenting the art of the world's great civilizations to the general public, is available in bookstores in English and French. £30/320FF.

▼

FIFTEEN OF THE WORLD'S MOST PROMISING YOUNG COMPOSERS of electro-acoustic music gathered at Headquarters on January 14-15 to exchange ideas and discuss different aspects of their field. The colloquium was organized by the Acousmatica Association, with financial ($4,000) and technical assistance from Unesco's International Fund for the Promotion of Culture.
Both sessions of the meeting opened with the presentation of works composed by the participants, followed by debates on technology, difficulties encountered by composers in their various countries and the possibilities offered by this field.

FOOD COMES FIRST

A NUMBER OF THREATENED WORLD HERITAGE SITES were high on the agenda at a recent meeting of the World Heritage Committee which has informed the respective governments of its "deep concern". In Portugal, the Monastery of the Hieronymites and the Tower of Belem in Lisbon are menaced by construction of an imposing building in the immediate victinity ; the Mount Nimba Nature Reserve in Guinea is threatened by a project for the extraction of iron ore ; the Galapagos Islands (Ecuador) are under increasing pressure from tourism and fishing; and, finally, Timbuktu (Mali) is endangered by encroaching sands. On the other hand, the Committee received assurances from France that all would be done to restore and maintain the flow of water around Mont St. Michel."

TIMBUKTU UNDER THREAT (Photo : Unesco/B. Mautet).

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THE CREATION OF A EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF UNESCO CLUBS and solidarity with the South were key recommendations of a meeting of European Clubs held in Strasbourg (France) from December 17-21. Natural and cultural heritage, human rights, democracy and citizenship, cultural development and interdependence were also high on the agenda of the meeting, attended by clubs from Andorra, Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey, the Ukrainian SSR, the USSR and Yugoslavia.

The World Bank has predicted that per capita income in the countries of sub-Saharan Africa will continue to fall until at least 1995. By then some 65-80% of the African population will live below the poverty line. On top of this, food production per capita has fallen by 20% since 1960, while the number of mouths to feed has continued to multiply (500 million Africans today, one billion in 25 years).

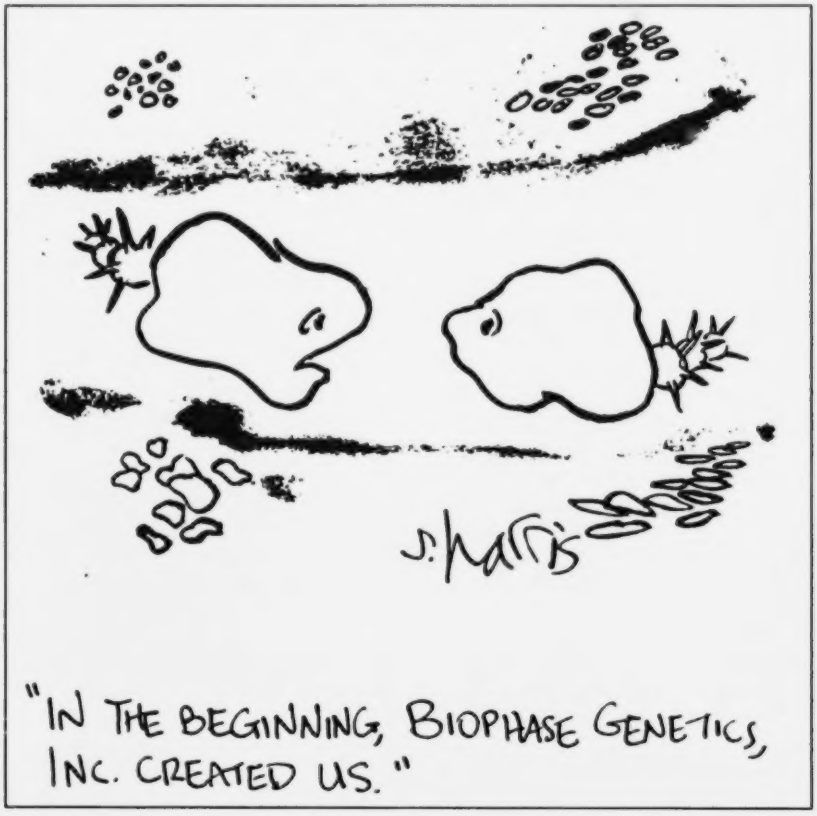
The challenge confronting Africa is first and foremost alimentary. The obstacles are imposing: climate, impoverished soils, lack of education and training for rural producers. Added to this are the immense difficulties of developing and adapting new technologies that are economically and ecologically viable.

To this end, the biological sciences, and particularly biotechnologies, may provide part of the answer. "Biotechnology" is a generic term primarily covering the applications of micro-organisms in industrial processes and the use of genetic technology to produce new plants or animals, and has already been used to great effect in the fields of health and agriculture. Biotechnologies are not subject to the whims of such variables as climate and can dramatically increase crop yields and reduce plant disease.

To promote the development of these technologies as a means of improving food production and dealing with disease and poverty on the continent, Unesco, UNDP and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) in 1981 created the African Biosciences Network. Armed with a budget of five million dollars provided by the international agencies for the five years from 1987-1992, the Network has undertaken to encourage and support research and training of Africans in the sectors of fundamental and applied biology.

SCIENTISTS LACK MEANS

"*Competence in the field of biological research is not lacking in Africa*" explains Amadou Tidiane Ba, coordinator of the ABN, which is headquartered at Unesco's Regional Office for Education in Africa



The ABN in action

Following the International Symposium on the Role of Biology in Resolving the Food Crisis in Africa in 1989, the ABN decided to focus its work on five major areas: plant and animal production, nutrition, agroforestry and biotechnology. Some examples of its work in these fields include:

Against insects that destroy rice-crops

In an effort to limit damage to rice crops before and after harvesting, the ABN launched a study of crop destruction by insects which attack plants or seed in the Tai region of the Côte d'Ivoire. This led to the identification of more resistant varieties of rice, which although yielding less, resulted in better crops because the insects stayed away. The study also concluded that monoculture over large areas often creates conditions favourable for certain destructive insects.

Agroforestry

In Nigeria, an ABN financed project led to the identification of tree species which, because of their capability to fix and protect soils and improve yields of associated crops, are appropriate for the development of agroforestry.

Biotechnology

In Gabon, a pioneer project on the in-vitro cultivation of manioc and banana plantain, and the establishment of healthy genetic stocks based on tissue taken from young plants suffering from viral diseases was financed by the ABN. The Network, through research such as this, hopes to use the knowledge thus gained as a "*scientific shortcut*" to a solution for Africa's food crisis.

Health

In Rwanda, the ABN financed a study of the transport of stools on filter paper for analysis, in the case of intestinal illnesses transmitted by water such as dysentery. This advantage of this method is that it provides and extremely simple and cheap way of conserving fragile material for transport to laboratories which, in Africa, are often far from the village where the samples were taken.

(BREDA) in Dakar (Senegal). "*However, our scientists suffer from a severe lack of material means, which has hampered their efforts and hindered training.*" Consequently, in a country like Senegal which has a number of high level researchers, laboratories are scattered, insufficiently equipped, unco-ordinated and have very few funds at their disposal. The ABN is attempting to bridge this gap.

ENDING THE ISOLATION

During the first phase of its work, the Network contributed to the training of some 650 African scientists, who took part in courses, workshops and conferences dealing with the priority areas of food production and health. Several of them also received financial support for their research projects. The ABN publishes their work, produces numerous documents and distributes activity reports in an attempt to alleviate the isolation experienced by African scientists. The distribution of these works, in turn, helps to sensitize African governments to the research being carried out in their region.

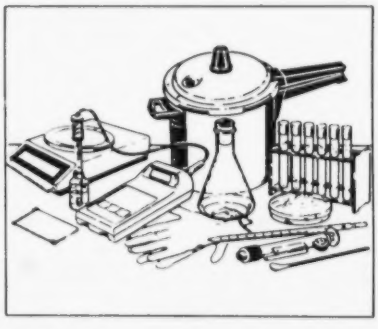
The Network has also undertaken an inventory of human potential and range of activities, which should allow for better collaboration and exchange of information between the continent's scientists.

The ABN is governed by an executive committee, which selects research directions and programmes according to the suggestions of three sub-regional committees (West Africa, Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa), which act, in turn, on proposals made by the national committees in the 35 countries included in the network.

Marie-Louise BENGA
Dakar

TEACHING BIOTECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS, a new, generously illustrated, 279-page handbook is designed to improve the quantity and quality of biotechnology education worldwide up to year 10.
Developed by the Commission for Biological Education of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS), it contains an overview of this fast-moving field, along with principles and applications, social implications, and suggestions for teaching biotechnology, including classroom lessons and case studies.Volume 39 in Unesco's *Science and Technology Education Document Series*, the book was edited by Joseph D. McInerney of the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study, in Colorado Springs, USA.

☛ *Science and Technology Education Sector.*



REQUIRED EQUIPMENT FOR THE PRODUCTION OF STERILE CULTURE MEDIA OR SOLUTIONS. One of the many illustrations in "Teaching Biotechnology in Schools".

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UNESCO'S INTERNATIONAL HYDROLOGICAL PROGRAMME (IHP), has established a new sub-regional centre for its work on the humid tropics, in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia).
The new centre will serve as a base for activities carried out under the IHP's Humid Tropics programme in South-East Asia, and will also be responsible for preparing research and training projects in the region. The Malaysian government has supplied offices and staff for the centre, which has already attracted the interest of the Australian funding agency, AIDAB .
The IHP is now looking to develop a similar centre to serve the Latin American and Caribbean region.

LIGHTS, CAMERAS... ACTION !

TEACHING METHODS THAT PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING, co-operation, peace and human rights were the subject of a sub-regional seminar held in Madani (Sudan) from December 17-21 and attended by specialists from teacher-training colleges in 10 African States. The participants stressed the importance of elaborating specific programmes for teacher-training colleges and to systematically include information on the standard instruments of the United Nations and Unesco, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Rights of the Child.

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UNESCO'S GENERAL INFORMATION PROGRAMME (PGI) has been awarded the 1990 Thailand Library Association Prize. The award was presented in December for the PGI's "*great contribution to library and information development in Thailand*". This was the third award received by the Programme last year; the other two being presented by Venezuela in recognition of the work carried out by the PGI Director in Caracas, Ms. Ursula Albertus, and by Thailand for the Programme's support for the Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research.

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THERE WILL BE MANY NEW WORLD ORDERS...but these emerging orders must all be based on democracy, UNESCO Director-General, Federico Mayor, told a top-level media meeting in New York on January 23. The conference, "News and the New World Order", was organized by the Gannett Foundation Media Centre at Columbia University. Mr. Mayor stressed that press freedom and freedom of expression are the guiding principles of UNESCO's programmes in the field of communication and affirmed his "*unshakeable belief*" that "*UNESCO has a duty to foster the emergence of a free and independent press throughout the world*".

If fan mail is an indication of a production house's success then the Creative Production and Training Centre Ltd. (CPTC) has done a good job in giving Jamaica's youth a programme that is not only culturally relevant but also entertaining and informative. The programme is called "Rappin". It's presented once a week and provides information on such issues on career guidance and topical subjects dealing with youth. Transmission began in December 1988 and the programme has been going strong ever since.

"Rappin" is just one of the many television programmes produced by the CPTC for the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC). *"The most significant feature of these productions,"* says CPTC's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Wycliffe Bennett, *"is that they tell Jamaicans about their own country, their culture and themselves."*

The Creative Production and Training Centre was born out of concern over the domination of imported programmes on Jamaican TV. In 1981, Unesco financed a feasibility study, which, in 1985, led to the establishment of the CPTC, a limited liability company jointly funded by Unesco's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), with a contribution of $95,000 to cover the first three phases of the project, UNDP, and the Governments of Japan and Jamaica.

TRAINING A KEY COMPONENT

During its first two to three years the company focussed on the installation of equipment and preliminary training of personnel in areas such as editing, graphics, television production and engineering. A few documentaries and features were produced. The best known of these was "Fix", a one-hour teledrama produced in 1987 and funded by the IPDC, and which, in 1988, won the Special Judges Prize in the 1988 Sony ICD Awards. The story deals with a young high school athlete whose addiction to "Crack" (a derivative of cocaine) wreaks havoc on his life. The production was also used as a training ground, with experienced Jamaican cameramen and directors initiating the company's staff in the techniques of producing television dramas.

These days the training has become more formalized. *"We offer certificate courses in Scriptwriting for Television, Techniques of Video Production, Radio Broadcasting Techniques, the use of Audiovisual Aids, and First Line Systems Maintenance, and all are in hot demand,"* explains Bennett.

Following the success of programmes such as "Rappin", "Fix", an historical series titled "The Unconquered", and a host of educational and environmental progammes, the CPTC is now looking to broaden its horizens. The Centre has presented a new project to the IPDC to improve its facilities with the aim of providing a major electronic media training centre for developing nations. *"We would also like to develop high quality TV programmes for export,"* says the Chairman.

"We are putting about two and a half hours a week of programmes on Jamaican TV, and we have built up a very good following," Bennett says proudly. *"Income is also growing healthily and we now have a staff of 72. The Unesco/IPDC partnership with the CPTC has proved a winner and has helped us build a solid foundation on which Jamaican TV can build for the future."*

☛ *Section of communication development*

"UNESCO RADIO PRESENTS : ..."

"I accidentally tuned in to one of your programmes via the Italian Radio Relay Service (IRRS) in Milan ... I was unaware that the Organization produced such diverse, high-quality programming that offers an insight into social and cultural issues. One could almost call your service "unique"."

This comment from a listener in Switzerland is typical of the letters regularly sent to Unesco Radio, whose voice is heard by millions around the world each week.

Unesco Radio is not, however, a broadcasting organization in the usual sense. *"We produce programmes on topics related to Unesco's activities or fields of interest, which are then sent or proposed to national and local radio stations in Member States,"* explains producer Erin Faherty-Mella (USA), who, with fellow-producer Maha Bulos (Jordan), has put together a library of hundreds of feature programmes (15'- 60' in length). These deal with an extraordinary range of subjects from AIDS education to the music industry in small countries, to the wonders of the brain and the need to preserve the past.

"I didn't know that the problem (of the return of cultural property to the original owners) was so complicated. Your programme on this issue was enlightening", writes one listener from Germany.

EDUCATIVE AND... FREE OF CHARGE

"One of the most successful programmes we have done so far is 'The Doors of the Mind', a three-part series on the education of the deaf," says Faherty-Mella, who has been with Unesco Radio for the past 17 years. *"It proved so popular that an Australian radio station requested permission to reproduce it on cassette for widespread distribution."*

"This programme is very educative," agrees a letter from Radio Uganda, *"especially for those directly concerned with the welfare of deaf people."*

The service is free of charge for radio stations, and today lists 176 subscribers who have asked to receive either tapes of all features produced, or programme scripts from which they make their selection.

In addition, weekly "air-time" has been bought from the shortwave services of IRRS, whose broadcasts cover eastern and western Europe and can even be picked up in the U.S and Australia, and Radio for Peace International (RFPI), based in Costa Rica and serving North America, Latin America and the Caribbean.

ERIN FAHERTY-MELLA (SEATED) AND MAHA BULOS AT WORK IN UNESCO'S STUDIO COMPLEX AT HEADQUARTERS.
(Photo : Unesco/Michel Claude).

Shorter news spots are also fed to UN Radio, Vatican Radio, IRRS, Veritas Asia, and the American university network, SCOLA, and any national station directly concerned with the news.

Unesco Radio began producing programmes in the late forties. *"Our main aim was, and remains, to contribute to the understanding of Unesco's ideals, through discussion of issues in the fields of education, science, culture and communication"* explains Faherty-Mella.

Programmes are also produced in French and in Russian by Luc Legris (Mauritius) and Vladislav Oudatchine (USSR). They deal principally with cultural events including famous anniversaries of artists, writers or scientists such as Vincent Van Gogh and Alphonse de Lamartine, and are available on demand.

Don't expect to hear the latest hit parade on Unesco Radio, but, as an English listener points out - *"It's good to hear something a little different on the shortwave bands"*.

☛ *Audiovisual Division, Office of Public Information*

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NOMINATIONS HAVE BEEN CALLED for the 1991 McLuhan Teleglobe Canada Award, which will be presented during Unesco's 26th General Conference in October/November.

The $50,000 prize is awarded biennially for any work or action that has contributed exceptionally to furthering a better understanding of the influence of the communications media and technology on society in general, and on its cultural, artistic and scientific activities in particular.

Nominations must be submitted to Unesco National Commissions before April 30 and all must forwarded to the Canadian National Commission within a month of that date.

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FOUR DIRECTORS FROM THE BHUTAN BROADCASTING SERVICE (BBS) travelled to Denmark in January for a management course, arranged by Unesco as part of its project to develop the Bhutan's radio network.

Radio Denmark (DR) and its consultancy, DANICOM, in Copenhagen offered their facilities and expertise for the training course which covered such areas as supervision, programming, the establishment of a news service and technical management.

The Unesco project has established an FM radio service in Bhutan's capital, Thimphu, and is planning eventually to extend the network nationwide.

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